
HSP Health, Society, and Populations

HSP 255 MEDICINE, HEALTH, AND SOCIETY. (3)

HSP/SOC 255 is an introduction to foundational social theories and concepts through the lens of health, healing, and medicine. Social science perspectives on health disparities across populations, how health and disease are defined and managed, and cultural experiences of illness provide a window into a broader understanding of social life. The course will focus on four major social theories – social constructionism, symbolic interactionism, conflict theory, and functionalism. We will use these theoretical foundations and related core concepts to explore topics like physician-patient interaction and the social organization and distribution of health care. HSP/SOC 255 will also provide an introduction to social science research through critical analysis of original scholarly work and exposure to conducting, analyzing, and presenting one’s own empirical findings. HSP/SOC 255 is ideal for those with career aspirations in medicine, nursing, or other health professions, and covers the sociology content included on the MCAT exam for pre-med students. This course also provides a critical foundation for those interested in learning about population health from the point of view of social science. Throughout the course, we will explicitly address the unique contributions of social science to a broader understanding of the etiology, treatment, experience, and consequences of illness and disease. (Same as SOC 255.)

#HSP 355 SOCIOLOGY OF HEALTH AND ILLNESS. (3)

Who defines health and illness? Why is disease and premature death unequally distributed in society? What social forces cause individuals to get sick or stay healthy? How have changes in the medical profession, the health care system, and health policy affected treatment outcomes and illness experiences? This course addresses these questions through a presentation of important concepts and substantive issues the sociology of health and illness (or medical sociology), and an introduction to major classic and contemporary research in this area. We will compare and contrast sociological perspectives on health with the perspectives offered by biomedicine, psychiatry and allied disciplines. The course has two major sections: The first covers the social origins of illness – the social construction of illness and biomedical knowledge, social epidemiology, and social influences on personal experiences of illness. The second section covers social and institutional responses to illness and the impact of these on physician-patient interactions, health outcomes, and the distribution of disease. In this section we will examine the medical profession, the health care system, health policy, and the changing nature of these. Class sessions will emphasize group discussions and exercises based on original scholarly writings. Discussions and exercises are designed to encourage the development of analytic skills, recognition of the benefits of collaborative approaches to complex problems, and independent exploration of course material. (Same as SOC 355.)

HSP 395 INDEPENDENT STUDY IN HSP. (3)

This course provides an HSP major with an opportunity to pursue specific academic and professional interests from social science perspectives that are not addressed in the HSP curriculum. The course may be repeated two times for a maximum of 6 credits. However, only three credit hours can count towards the HSP major requirements, and they must be applied to one of the courses required in the “Topics in Society and Health” Intellectual Unit. Prereq: Major in HSP with a minimum 3.0 GPA in the major and consent of the instructor.

HSP 399 PRACTICUM IN HEALTH, SOCIETY AND POPULATIONS. (1-3)

This course provides an internship experience in a health workplace under the guidance of an HSP faculty member. A learning contract must be approved by the HSP faculty sponsor and one of the HSP Co-Directors. This course may be repeated for a maximum of 12 credits. Maximum of six hours of HSP 399 will count toward the HSP Major requirements, and this is limited to the Health Professions Intellectual Unit. Pass/fail only. Prereq: HSP Major, consent of instructor and HSP learning contract.

HSP 499 HEALTH, SOCIETY AND POPULATIONS CAPSTONE (Subtitle required). (3)

This course provides an integrative experience for HSP majors in their junior or senior year. The seminar format fosters integration of the program’s interdisciplinary coursework, while providing the opportunity to focus on a particular area of interest within the topical theme of the seminar. Students will engage in a variety of activities designed to increase their understanding of the theoretical and methodological approaches that characterize the HSP perspective. They will then use this perspective to design or evaluate a project that addresses health change. The course will consist of seminar sessions, smaller peer group meetings, and individualized tutorial sessions. Students will learn to critically and respectfully engage with the work of their peers and effectively communicate the results of their projects. Prereq: Junior or Senior standing in HSP, or permission of instructor. This course is a Graduation Composition and Communication Requirement (GCCR) course in certain programs, and hence is not likely to be eligible for automatic transfer credit to UK.